REMARKS

Claims 1, 2 and 5-17 have been amended. Claim 3-4 have been canceled.

The Examiner has objected to the Title of the Invention as not descriptive of the invention. Applicants have amended the Title as suggested by the Examiner, thereby obviating this objection.

The Examiner has objected to claims 3 and 4 as informal. Applicants have canceled these claims thus overcoming the Examiner's objection.

The Examiner has rejected applicants' claims 1-3, 6-7, 9-10, 12-13 and 15-16 under 35USC § 103(a) as being unpatentable over the Lowy, et al. (US 5,768,151) patent taken with the De Angelis, et al. (US 5,552,824) patent. The Examiner has further rejected applicants' claims 4-5, 8, 11, 14 and 17 also under 35USC § 103(a) based on the latter two patents taken with the Iijima (US 6,286,071) patent. With respect to applicants' claims, as amended, these rejections are respectfully traversed.

Applicants' independent claims 1, 6, 9, 12 and 15 have been amended to better define applicants' invention. Amended claim 1 recites an image pickup system comprising: a plurality of image pickup apparatuses; and a control apparatus adapted to set one of said plurality of image pickup apparatuses as a master camera, wherein said master camera includes (a) a synchronization information generating unit adapted to generate synchronization information for synchronizing said plurality of image pickup apparatuses (b) a communication unit adapted to transmit said synchronization information to said plurality of image pickup apparatuses, (c) a frame synchronization signal generating unit adapted to generate a frame synchronization signal using said synchronization information and time information for managing a communication cycle of said communication unit, and (d) an

image data generating unit adapted to generate image data using said frame synchronization signal.

Applicants' amended independent claim 6 recites an image pickup apparatus having a synchronization information generating unit, a communication unit, a frame synchronization signal generating unit and an image data generating unit, as recited in amended claim 1. Amended independent method claim 12 has features similar to amended claim 6.

Applicants' amended claim 9 recites an image pickup apparatus comprising: a communication unit adapted to receive synchronization information for synchronizing a plurality of image pickup apparatuses from a master camera; a frame synchronization signal generating unit adapted to generate a frame synchronization signal using said synchronization information and time information for managing a communication cycle of said communication unit; and an image data generating unit adapted to generate image data using said frame synchronization signal. Amended method claim 15 has features similar to amended claim 9.

Each of the independent claims thus requires an image pickup apparatus or control of such apparatus in which synchronizing information for synchronizing a plurality of image pickup apparatuses is generated or received, a communication unit transmits or receives the synchronizing information, a frame synchronizing signal is generated using the synchronizing information and time information for managing a communication cycle of the communication unit, and image data is generated using the frame synchronization signal. The feature of generating a frame synchronization signal using synchronizing information and time information for managing a communication cycle of a communication unit is described on

page 10, line 12, through page 11, line 4, of applicants' specification. Such a construction is not taught or suggested by the cited art of record.

More particularly, the Lowy patent discloses a system which includes a master camera and a slave camera and shows a SYNC signal being supplied from the master camera to the slave camera. The patent mentions nothing about the SYNCH signal other than stating that "[a] suitable video camera is a Sony DXC-151ACCD Color Video camera, which includes means for synchronizing to other cameras and video equipment." The Lowy patent is thus devoid of any teaching or suggestion of generating a frame synchronizing signal using synchronizing information and time information for managing a communication cycle of a communication unit which transmits or receives the synchronizing information.

The Examiner has argued that the DeAngelis, et al. patent discloses "wherein said frame synchronization signal generating means generates said frame synchronization signal by using time information for managing a predetermined communication cycle and said synchronization information." As a basis for this, the Examiner points to column 21, lines 1-34, of the DeAngelis, et al. patent and further states "each frame generated by a camera is marked with an 'absolute' time marking."

However, in looking at this paragraph of the DeAngelis, et al. patent and the preceding paragraph, the patent merely states at column 20, lines 62-65, that "the system employs cameras having tunable timers that are maintained accurate enough to mark each frame with all accurate time before sending it to storage or the central processor." The patent also mentions that "each tunable camera periodically communicates with a precision timer and after initially establishing synchronous time, periodically re-tunes its clock rate to maintain synchronicity" and "[t]hus in a system employing such cameras, each frame generated by a

camera is marked with an 'absolute' time marking." Finally, the patent further mentions that the precision timer can be in a primary camera which communicates with secondary or slave cameras.

Thus, the DeAngelis, et al patent merely teaches marking the frames of each camera of a plurality of cameras with an absolute time and that this is made possible by using tunable timers in the cameras which are tuned by a precision timer which may be in a primary camera. However, this is not a teaching or suggestion of generating a frame synchronizing signal using synchronizing information and time information for managing a communication cycle of a communication unit which transmits or receives the synchronization information. Thus, both the Lowy, et al. patent and the DeAngelis, et al. patent fail to teach or suggest such feature.

Applicants' amended independent claims 1, 6, 9, 12 and 15, and their respective dependent claims, all of which recite such feature thus patentably distinguish over the Lowy, et al. and De Angelis, et al. patents. The Iijima patent fails to add anything to the Lowy, et al. and De Angelis, et al. patents to change this conclusion.

In view of the above, it is submitted that applicants' claims, as amended, patentably distinguish over the cited art of record. Accordingly, reconsideration of the claims is respectfully requested.

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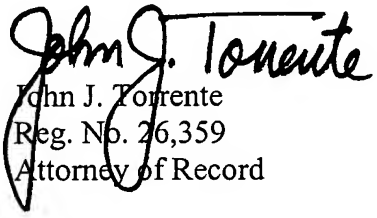
Respectfully submitted,



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